UTILITY PATENT APPLICATION

COVER SHEET

Inventors: Hao Jan Tang
Jack Tang
3118 80th Street
East Elmhurst, NY 11370

Attorney: Randal D. Homburg
Reg. No. 41,847

Corresp. Address: Randal D. Homburg, #41,847
P.O. Box 10470
Midwest City, OK 73140-1470
(405) 769-9281

Title of Invention: **Automobile Seat Cover**

TITLE OF THE INVENTION

Automobile Seat Cover

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

None

I. Background of the Invention

1. Field of Invention

The seat cover for an automobile to be installed over existing automobile seats includes at least two fabric straps having a hook surface, each of the fabric straps being attached to the automobile seat by a lower hook engaging the lower seat frame, an upper hook engaging the headrest supports, and an intermediate retaining bracket which engages each strap and retains it in the fold of the automobile seat located between the seat portion and the back portion of the automobile seat, the straps held against the inner surface of the seat with the hook surface facing outward from the automobile seat, with a lower seat cover covering the seat portion, the lower seat cover having an inner surface having a fabric loop surface which engages the hook surface of each strap, and an upper seat cover covering the back portion, the upper seat cover also having an inner surface having a fabric loop surface which engages the hook surface of each strap, the upper seat cover also having a headrest cover which covers the headrest of the automobile seat, the headrest cover removably attaching to the upper seat cover by a headrest retaining tab made of a fabric hook material.

2. Description of Prior Art

The following United States patents were discovered and are disclosed within this application for utility patent. All relate to automotive seat covers which are intended to be placed over existing automobile seats.

In U.S. Patent No. 5,028,472 to Gray, a fastening means for a custom fit seat cover includes a seat cover material having a loop pile fastening structure conforming to the seat to be covered, a plurality of hook pile fastening tabs connected to the seat cover material, the hook pile fastening tabs wrapped around the portion of the seat to be covered with the hook pile fastening tabs fastened to the seat cover whereby the hook pile fastening tabs wrap around the portion of the seat to be covered and are adjustable over the loop pile surface of the seat cover material. The hook material is not provided in straps that attach to the headrest by a first hook, the lower seat frame by a second hook and within the fold of the upper and lower seat portion by a hook, adjusted to tension and attach to the loop material on the back of the seat covers, the straps remaining fastened to the seat when the seat covers are removed.

U.S. Patent No. 5,803,539 to Dewar discloses a lower seat cover attached to the lower portion of an automobile seat by a lap strap engaging a buckle strap, an upper seat cover attached to the upper portion of an automobile seat by a second lap strap engaging a buckle strap, and a separate headrest cover attaching to a headrest by adhesive strips. The straps are all integrated with the seat covers and are removed with the seat covers. The straps do not remain on the seat when the seat covers are removed for periodic cleaning.

In U.S. Patent No. 6,652,026 to Toyota, a headrest secured automobile seat cover is disclosed having a contoured seat cover which folds to cover the front of the upper seat portion and top of the lower seat portion of an automobile seat, the attachment to the seat comprising bottom straps, middle straps and top straps. The top straps are either permanently attached to the seat cover or removably attached through respective loops attached to the seat cover the top straps further attached to the seat by either hooks, VELCRO or ball and snap chain attaching to the headrest support bars

at the top of the seat. the bottom and middle straps are also either permanently attached to the seat cover or placed through loops attached to the seat cover, the opposite ends of those straps either attaching to each other by a buckle, or having hooks attached to the ends which engage some portion of the seat. The seat cover may be removed, but the top, middle and lower straps must be detached from the seat if they are permanently attached, or are left dangling if placed through loops on the seat cover, each strap having to be reattached independently when the seat cover is reapplied.

Other patents reviewed in preparation of this application include U.S. Patent No. 4,232,898 to Bodrero, 5,007,676 to Lien, 5,234,252 to Wallach and 6,309 017 to Middleton.

II. Summary of the Invention

In older vehicles and in some restorations, the automobile seats will wear out to the extent that reupholstery becomes necessary or at least an aesthetic option. This can be costly, and as demonstrated by the abundance of prior art in this area, temporary or removably seat covers my be the most practical option. In the prior art, as noted above, nearly all of the seat covers attach to the seats through straps or fastening materials which are either permanently attached to the seat or are removed when the seat cover is removed. To date, the seat cover and the attaching means have not been presented as truly independent, nor has the attaching means which remains on the seat been presented in a manner not permanently attached to the seat cover by either an adhesive or seam. In addition, if the seat cover is removed for periodic cleaning or a change of taste, the attaching means must be repositioned and reapplied to attach the seat covers back onto the automobile seat. It would be of much convenience to provide the attaching means as completely independent from the seat cover with removal of the seat cover not effecting the attachment of the attaching means to the automobile seat, making reapplication of the seat cover less time consuming and requiring less effort,

and also making reapplication more consistent than if the entire attaching means had to be repositioned and completely reapplied.

It is therefore the objective of the present seat cover to provide an upper seat cover with an integrated headrest cover and a lower seat cover with a loop pile material on their inner surfaces and at least two independent elongated straps having an outer surface with a hook pile material, each strap having an upper end attached to an upper hook engaging the headrest support bar, a lower end attached to a lower hook engaging the lower seat portion frame on the underside of the lower seat portion, and an intermediate segment of the strap which is placed through a gap between the upper seat portion and the lower seat portion, the intermediate segment retained through the gap by an intermediate hook. The at least two independent elongated straps are attached to the automobile seat, and then the upper seat cover is attached to the upper seat portion, the loop pile material of the seat cover attaching to the hook pile material on each strap, after which the lower seat cover is attached to the lower seat portion, the loop pile material on the lower seat cover attaching to the hook pile material on each strap. If the seat covers are removed, the straps remain secured to the automobile seat which remain attached, making reapplication of the seat covers a simple process of merely placing the seat covers back on the automobile seats.

A second objective of the present seat cover is to have a headrest cover integrated with the upper seat cover, the headrest cover simply wrapping around the headrest and attaching to a tab on the back surface of the upper seat cover, thereby giving the headrest a uniform upholstered appearance to the remainder of the automobile seat without the need of providing an additional piece of material to have to deal with during installation, the separate headrest covers being the subject matter of several prior art patents.

III. Description of the Drawings

The following drawings are submitted with this utility patent application.

Figure 1 is an exploded perspective view of the automobile seat cover on an automobile seat.

Figure 2 is a side cross section of the automobile seat cover on an automobile seat.

Figure 3 is a perspective view of the lower hook, with phantom lines indicating the lower seat frame and one of the fabric straps.

Figure 4 is a perspective view of the upper seat hook, with phantom line indicating the headrest support and one of the fabric straps.

Figure 5 is a perspective view of the intermediate retaining bracket with phantom lines indicating one of the fabric straps.

Figure 6 is a side cross section showing the automobile seat with the fabric strap engaging the inner surface of the upper and lower seat covers.

Figure 7 is a side cross section of the headrest and the headrest cover of the upper seat cover.

IV. Description of the Preferred Embodiment

A seat cover apparatus **10** for placement over an existing automobile seat **100** having an upper seat portion **110**, a lower seat portion **120** having a lower seat portion frame **128**, a gap **130** between the upper seat portion **110** and lower seat portion **120**, and a headrest **140** attached to the upper seat portion **110** by at least one headrest support **142**, the apparatus **10**, shown in FIGS. 1-7, comprising an upper seat cover **20** having an integrated headrest cover **30** adapted to cover the headrest **140** of the automobile seat **100**, the upper seat cover **20** and headrest **30** having respective but common rear surfaces **22, 32** of a loop pile material **24, 34** and a headrest attaching tab **26** made of a hook pile material **27**, a lower seat cover **40** having a rear surface **42** of a loop pile material **44**,

the upper seat cover **20** adapted to conform to the upper seat portion **110** of the automobile seat **100** and covering at least a front surface **112**, at least a portion of the back surface **114** and a top surface **116** of the upper seat portion **110**, the lower seat cover **40** adapted to conform to the lower seat portion **120** of the automobile seat **100** covering at least a front surface **122**, top surface **124** and two side surfaces **126** of the lower seat portion **120**, and at least two independent elongated straps **50** having an outer surface **52** of a hook pile material **54**, each strap **50** having an upper end **56**, a lower end **58** and an intermediate segment **57**, the upper end **56** attached to an upper hook **60** which further engages the headrest support **142**, the lower end **58** attached to a lower hook **70** which further engages the lower seat portion frame **128** and the intermediate segment **57** extending through the gap **130** between the upper seat portion **110** and the lower seat portion **120** and retained within the gap **130** by an intermediate hook **80**, wherein the at least two straps **50** are attached to the automobile seat **100** with the outer surface **52** each strap positioned away from the automobile seat **100** using the upper hooks **60**, lower hooks **70** and intermediate hooks **80**, as indicated in FIGS. 1 and 2, after which the upper seat cover **20** is placed upon the upper seat portion **110**, the lower seat cover **40** is placed on the lower seat portion **120** and the headrest cover **30** is wrapped around the headrest **140** and the headrest attaching tab **26** is attached to the rear surface **32** of the headrest cover **30**, the hook pile material **54** of the straps **50** and headrest attaching tabs **26** engaging the loop pile material **24**, **34**, **44** on the rear surfaces **22**, **32**, **42** of the respective upper seat cover **20**, headrest cover **30** and lower seat cover **40** retaining the seat covers **20**, **40** on the automobile seat **100.**

The upper hook **60** is further defined as indicated in FIG. 4 as having a buckle section **62**, a neck section **64** and a hook section **66.** The upper ends **56** of each of the straps **50** is connected to the buckle section **62** of the upper hooks **60** by looping the upper end **56** of each strap **50** and folding

each strap **50** back upon itself. The overlapping strap may thus be adhesively attached to itself. The hook section **66** of the upper hook **60** is attached to the headrest support **142**, retaining the upper hook **60** and the attached upper end **56** of the strap **50** to the upper seat portion **110.** The lower hook **70** is further defined as indicated in FIG. 3 as having a buckle section **72**, a neck section **74** and a hook section **76.** The lower ends **58** of each strap **50** are connected to the buckle section **72** of each lower hook **70** by looping the lower end **58** of the strap **50** and folding the strap **50** back upon itself. Again, the overlapping strap may be adhesively attached to itself. The hook section **76** of the lower hook **70** is attached to the lower seat portion frame **128**, retaining the lower hook **70** and the attached lower end **58** of each strap **50** to the lower seat portion.

The intermediate hook **80**, indicated in FIG. 5, has a first buckle section **82**, a second buckle section **84** and a cross member **86.** The intermediate segment **57** of each strap **50** is retained by the cross member **86** with the strap **50** threaded though the first buckle section **82** and second buckle section **84** over the cross member **86.** Preferably, the intermediate hook **80** is attached to the strap **50** prior to the attachment to the upper hook **60** and lower hook **70.** The intermediate hook **80** and the intermediate segment **57** of the strap **50** are then inserted through the gap **130** between the upper seat portion **110** and lower seat portion **120** after which the intermediate hook **80** is positioned in a vertical orientation as indicated in FIG. 2 of the drawings to prevent the intermediate hook **80** and attached intermediate segment **57** of the strap **50** from being withdrawn through the gap **130** after insertion, firmly retaining the intermediate hook **80** against the lower seat portion **120** and upper seat portion **110.**

Figure 6 demonstrates a cross section of the automobile seat **100**, the strap **50** with the hook pile material **54** directed away from the automobile seat **100** and the loop pile material **24**, **44**

attached to the inner surface **22, 42** of the seat covers **20, 40** subsequent to application of the seat covers **20, 40** over the attached strap **50** upon the automobile seat **100**, FIG. 6 representing the upper seat cover **20** and upper seat portion **110** as well as the lower seat cover **40** and the lower seat portion **120.**

The application of the headrest cover **30** to the headrest **140** is demonstrated in FIG. 7 of the drawings. The headrest cover **30** attached to the upper seat cover **20** is wrapped around the headrest **140**, the headrest **140** being adjusted to height prior to installation. The inner surface **32** of the headrest cover **30** is then attached to the headrest attaching tab **26** extending from the rear surface **22** of the headrest cover **30**, thereby connecting the hook pile material **27** on the headrest attaching tab **28** to the loop pile material **34** on the inner surface **32** of the headrest cover **30.**

The upper seat cover **20** may also include an elastic strap **28** which extends across part of the upper seat cover **20** to hold and conform the upper seat cover **20** to the front surface **112**, top surface **116** and at least a portion of the back surface **114** of the upper seat portion **110** as demonstrated in FIGS. 1 and 7 of the drawings.

It is also contemplated within the scope of this apparatus that the upper seat cover **110** may be extend to cover the sides of the upper seat portion **110** of the automobile seat **100** as well as the entire back surface **114** of the upper seat portion **110.** While not material to the apparatus, the upper and lower seat covers **20, 40** would be most practically presented as made of a moisture impermeable fabric, including leather, synthetic leather, canvas or other treated fabric.

It is also contemplated that the upper end **56** and lower end **58** of the straps may be directly connected the headrest support **142** and lower seat portion frame **128**, or be connected with some type of snap connection, buckle, adhesive or other type retaining mean. In addition, the intermediate

hook **80** may be presented with slots in the first buckle section **82** and second buckle section **84** which would allow for the intermediate segment **57** of the strap **50** to be inserted through the gap **130**, with the intermediate segment **57** of the strap **50** being inserted through the slots to allow application of the intermediate hook **80** after the intermediate segment **57** of the strap **50** is placed through the gap **130** or after the upper and lower hooks **60**, **70** are attached to the strap **50.**

While the apparatus has been particularly shown and described with reference to a preferred embodiment thereof, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that changes in form and detail may be made therein without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

What is claimed is: